

BACKFLOW ASSEMBLY TESTER REQUIREMENTS

City of Columbus Approved
Certified Backflow Assembly Testers
Effective May 21, 2015

Thank you for your interest in becoming a City of Columbus Approved Certified Backflow Assembly Tester. Department of Public Utilities Rule and Regulation 09-02, Section VIII.B requires testers to be approved by the Division of Water Administrator. This document explains the key requirements that a tester must meet to obtain approval by the Administrator.

The City of Columbus, under contract, is the water purveyor to numerous political subdivisions in the central Ohio area. The approval requirements apply within the City of Columbus and all properties served by the Columbus Division of Water within the contract areas listed in the following table.

Areas Served by the City of Columbus, Department of Public Utilities, Division of Water			
Brice	Groveport (partial)	New Albany	Valleyview
Brookside Estates subdivision, Franklin County, unincorporated	Hamilton Meadows subdivision, Franklin County, unincorporated	Ridgewood Estates subdivision, Franklin County, unincorporated	Village Park subdivision, Franklin County, unincorporated
Dublin	Hilliard	Riverlea	Whitehall
Glacier Ridge Metro Park	Marble Cliff	SWACO and adjacent properties	Worthington
Grandview Heights	Minerva Park	Upper Arlington	
Grove City		Urbancrest	

The requirements to be an approved tester are listed below. These requirements do not apply in areas served by another public water system (PWS). Other PWSs in the region include Aqua Ohio, Bexley, DelCo, Gahanna, Groveport (partial), Jefferson Township, Obetz, Reynoldsburg, and Westerville. Customers receive their bills from the PWS that serves the property. If you have any questions about which PWS serves a property, contact the customer to determine who they get their bill from. Contact the PWS for information on their requirements. If you have questions about City of Columbus requirements, please contact the Backflow Compliance Office (BCO) at backflow@columbus.gov or (614) 645-6674.

Effective date of these requirements

Existing testers – Testers holding approval status on the effective date of this document and who maintain their approval status will be required to follow these requirements beginning January 1, 2016. Testers must complete a new application form and return a signed copy to our office no later than January 1, 2016.

New testers – New testers whose applications are received on or after the effective date of this document are subject to these requirements.

Lapsed testers – Testers whose approval status lapses for more than 30 days for any reason after the effective date at the top of this document will be required to follow these requirements to regain approval status.

To obtain approval by the City of Columbus as a backflow assembly tester you must:

1. Be currently recognized by the Ohio Department of Commerce (DOC) as a Certified Backflow Tester.
2. Be currently registered with the Columbus Department of Building Regulations.* (see note next page)

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3. Possess test equipment that has been calibrated within the last (12) twelve months.
4. Agree to the *Requirements of City of Columbus Approved Certified Backflow Assembly Testers* listed below
5. Agree to use the City's on-line test submittal application.
6. Fill out the City of Columbus Approved Certified Backflow Assembly Testers application in its entirety and submit a signed copy along with documentation for Items 1-3 to the BCO.
7. Pay a BCO registration fee of \$100.00 to the DPU Public Office. *

Requirements of City of Columbus Approved Certified Backflow Assembly Testers:

1. Maintain up to date registrations/certifications required in Items 1 through 3 above. Provide copies to the BCO. The BCO will **not** notify you when your information needs to be updated or fees need to be paid.
2. Use only testing equipment that has been calibrated and registered with the BCO. Testing equipment may not be used if it has been more than 12 months since it was last calibrated.
3. Provide customers with accurate tests results and be responsible for quality control. Provide a signed certified copy of the completed test report to the property owner and/or person in charge of the premise.
4. Submit all test results to the BCO within (5) five days of completion using the City's approved on-line web application at <https://columbus.tokaytest.com>. Ensure that submittals are complete and accurate. Failure to submit reports that are complete and accurate may result in rejection of all test reports, revocation of approved tester status, removal from the City's approved tester list, and/or a requirement to retest the backflow assembly.
5. Pay a \$25.00 annual registration fee to the DPU Public Office, due February 15th of each year regardless of when you initially were approved.*

NOTE: If you do not pay the fee or submit the required documentation to the Backflow Compliance Office by the expiration date we may, without notice, revoke your approved status. Once your approval is revoked, you may be required to pay the full \$100.00 and provide all necessary documentation before we will return you to approved status and add you back to the approved tester list(s). **Tests completed while not in an approved status will not be accepted.**

We Reserve the Right To:

1. Check test results submitted and reject incorrect, incomplete, or questionable tests.
2. List your information for customers on the BCO website. Please note that lists will be updated frequently and generated in random order to minimize preferential selection of testers at the top of the list. Information will include, but may not be limited to:
 - Tester's Name • DOC Certification # • Company and address • Telephone Number
3. Revoke your approved status and remove your name from the City's list of approved testers for failure to follow these guidelines. If your approved status is revoked any test reports from you will not be accepted. Fees will not be refunded if your approved status is revoked for any reason.

*DOC certified testers who only test devices at their employer's facilities do not need to be registered with the Department of Building Regulations or pay the BCO registration or annual fee. Registration with BCO is still required.

CHANGES AFFECTING THE BACKFLOW COMPLIANCE OFFICE (BCO) ANNUAL FEE

The annual renewal date for the Backflow Compliance Office registration fee is moving to February 15. This is intended to alleviate the burden on testers and our office of processing annual renewals during the busiest testing period of the year.

Existing testers

Testers who are in approved status as of the effective date listed above and who maintain approved status through June 30, 2015 will have their registration extended at no cost until February 15, 2016. Testers who have already paid for the July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016 time period will have their registration extended until February 15, 2017.

New or lapsed testers

Registration for new or lapsed testers applying for approved status after the effective date listed above will run through February 15, 2016 upon payment of the \$100 initial fee.

GUIDELINES ON BCO ACCEPTANCE OF TESTS

1. **Online test submittal** –BCO approved testers must submit tests using the BCO's web-based application within 5 days of completion of the test. Instructions on use of the software are available on the BCO web site at www.columbus.gov/backflow/testers.
2. **Tests performed without valid credentials** – Tests performed while any credential (DOC certification, Columbus Building Regulations license, Backflow Compliance Office registration, or gage calibration) is not valid **will not be accepted**. The device must be retested once any lapsed credential has been addressed.
3. **Tests performed with valid credentials, but documentation of credentials was not provided to Backflow Compliance Office** – Tests will not be accepted by the Backflow Compliance Office until our office has received documentation that the required credentials were held at the time of the test and any fees have been paid. Retesting will not be required provided you can demonstrate that all credentials were up to date at the time of the test.

GUIDELINES ON RE-REGISTRATION WITH BACKFLOW COMPLIANCE OFFICE IN CASE OF LAPSED APPROVAL

1. **Lapsed credential or documentation, 0-30 days** – Renew with no reinstatement fee as long as Backflow Compliance Office annual fee is current and necessary documentation of credentials is provided. If the Backflow Compliance Office registration is the lapsed credential the \$25 annual fee must be paid.
2. **Lapsed credential or documentation, 31-90 days** – Renew with \$100 initial fee as long as documentation of credentials is provided. One-hundred dollar fee is not pro-rated and will be valid until the next February 15th.
3. **Lapsed credential or documentation, 91 days or more** – No renewal. A new application along with the \$100 initial fee is required. The \$100 fee is not pro-rated and will be valid until the next February 15th.

RENEWAL WINDOW

1. Annual renewal with the BCO is required by February 15th each year. Renewals may be made up to three months in advance, i.e. between November 16th and February 15th. Renewals are only valid for one year.

APPROVED DEVICE TESTER LIST, APPROVED IRRIGATION DEVICE TESTER LIST

As a service to our customers, the BCO maintains two lists of City of Columbus Approved Certified Backflow Assembly Testers. One list includes all contractors who are approved to test irrigation system backflow prevention devices. The other list includes only contractors who are approved to test approved backflow prevention assemblies on any type of plumbing system. A contractor who is approved to test assemblies on any type of system will be named on both lists. Testers who are only approved to test devices at their employer's facilities will not be included on these lists.

These lists are merely intended to inform customers of contractors who have been approved to test backflow devices. Inclusion or exclusion from the list does not determine a tester's approval status which is determined by meeting the necessary criteria spelled out above. The lists of approved testers are regularly updated and posted on the City of Columbus web site at www.columbus.gov/backflow/consumers. Hard copies are available on request.

Published lists will only contain testers whose credentials are not scheduled to expire within the next 2 weeks from when the list is published. This is expected to provide owners with better assurance that a tester who was approved at the time the list was published is still approved by the time their test is performed. The expiration date of the list will be clearly provided. This list will be updated weekly.

TESTER CREDENTIALS LIST

Another list containing the credential expiration dates that the BCO uses to approve testers is available on the City website at www.columbus.gov/backflow/testers. Testers should periodically check their information against this list to ensure that their approval status is based on correct information. To remain on the published list(s) without interruption it is in the interest of each tester to renew their credentials and submit necessary documentation to the BCO in a timely fashion.

ON LINE TEST SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES

Tests can be submitted on most electronic devices connected to the internet. An active internet connection is required to access the application. The web site is: <https://columbus.tokaytest.com/>.

The backflow prevention device serial number and house/building number are provided to the owner in the test-due letter sent from the BCO. **You will need this information exactly as it appears on the letter to submit test results.** We suggest you obtain this information from the customer at the time you schedule the appointment. A list with this information is also on the Tester's Page of the City web site at www.columbus.gov/backflow/testers. However because serial numbers may be duplicated on different makes or models of devices it may be necessary to perform additional verification if using this list.

NEW CONSTRUCTION OR NEW INSTALLATION

On line submittal of test results is only available for existing devices or replacement of existing devices that are already in the BCO database. For devices installed with new construction or new installations where backflow prevention did not previously exist, it will be necessary to coordinate with the BCO. Please contact the BCO at backflow@columbus.gov or (614) 645-6674 for direction when new devices are tested.